

Athens, 12 May 2022

United for peace

Today, in Athens, Caritas Europa announces the conclusion of its annual Regional Conference, the main decision making body of the European network. 124 delegates from 39 countries elected their new Executive Board and confirmed Msgr. Michael Landau in his role as President of the European network for a second term.

The Regional Conference, hosted by Caritas Hellas, benefitted from the contributions of many guests and took place in the context of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and the humanitarian challenges that have resulted. The President of Caritas Ukraine, Tetiana Stawnychy, and the Executive Director of Caritas Spes, Vyacheslav Grynevych, attended and briefed delegates on the realities of the war on the ground. A session of solidarity and support was organised, as well as a moment of prayer for peace.

The UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres also spoke to the Conference, sending a video message to greet those attending. He acknowledged the importance of the network in mitigating the devastating consequences of multiple crises such as climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the war in Ukraine on the world's most vulnerable.

“ Your commitment to peace and justice and your contributions to fight poverty and inequality is more critical than ever.”
António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations

“ Our common engagement makes a substantial difference to many people in our continent and beyond. We stand for a social Europe able to cope with the consequences of the pandemic and war.”
Msgr. Michael Landau, President of Caritas Europa

Peace, solidarity, and mission were some keywords that emerged from the opening sessions. During the thematic sessions, the delegates engaged in discussions on what to prioritise in their work in the coming future and voted on the following key recommendations.

1. Set up at national level advisory committees involving the people we serve and set up other measures to foster their empowerment;

more information

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about caritas

Caritas Europa is a network of 49 member organisations in 46 European countries and one of the 7 regions of Caritas Internationalis. Our members assist and provide services to millions of people in need.

Caritas Europa aims at lifting people out of poverty by empowering them and by influencing unjust structures and unfair policies that keep people trapped in positions of disempowerment.

2. **Strengthen Caritas in the mission of the Church and build on grassroots participation;**
3. **Enable structures to facilitate and improve the involvement of youth and women within Caritas at all levels, including governance.**

These recommendations shall guide the reflections of the European network as they seek to implement the Strategic Framework 2021–2028 and respond to the signs of the times.

Notes to editor

Hosted by Caritas Hellas, with an opening by Mons. Antonios Voutsinos, President of Caritas Hellas. Speakers included Ms. Sofia Voultepsi, Greek Deputy Minister of Migration and Asylum, Archbishop Savio Hon Tai-Fai, Apostolic Nuncio to Greece, and Father Joseph Bazouzou, Exarch of the Catholic Armenian Ordinariat, representing the Catholic Bishops Conference of Greece. A message was also received by Cardinal Michael Czemy, Prefect of the Dicastery on Integral Human Development.

Caritas Europa is a network of 49 organisations from 46 countries and the Regional Conference is its main statutory decision-making assembly. In Athens, the following representatives for the period May 2023 – May 2027 were elected.

- **President: Msgr. Michael Landau**
- **Vice-President: Tetiana Stawnychy**
- **Members of the Executive Board: Caritas Denmark, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Scotland, Slovakia and Ukraine**
- **Members of the representative Council of Caritas Internationalis: Caritas Germany, Italy and Ukraine**
- **Internal Auditor: Caritas Czech Republic**